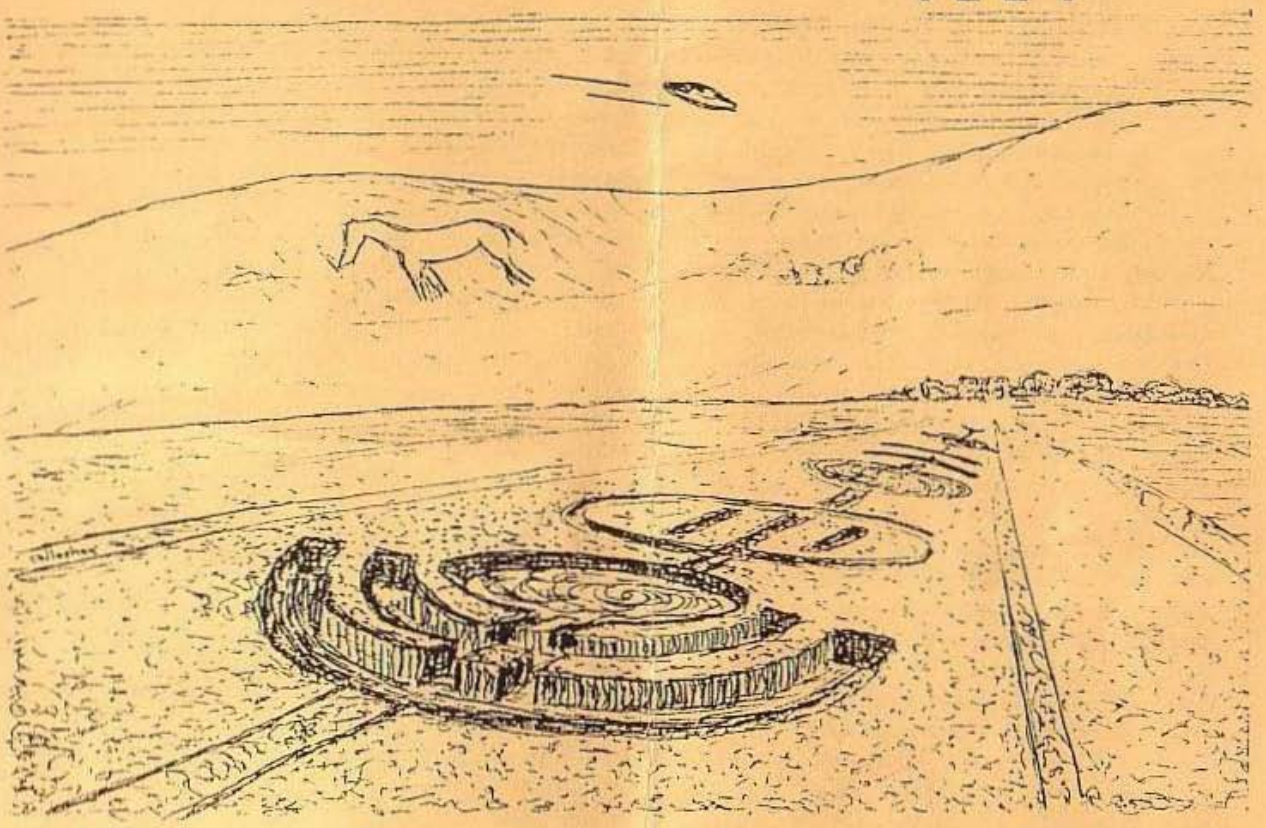
NORTHERN UFO NEWS

149
SUMMER
1991



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Editor: Jenny Randles Graphics : Bill Callaghan

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37 HEATHBANK ROAD CHEADLE HEATH STOCKPORT CHESHIRE ENGLAND SK3 OUP

NOTE: Apologies again to readers for the lateness of this edition due to circumstances beyond our control. Hopefully the August issue will follow more quickly than normal to get us back on schedule. Please bear with me JR

J. R. Comments .... *Possibly the most interesting and important piece of movie film depicting a British UFO was taken by surveyor Peter Day at Cuddington in Buckinghamshire in January 1973. As briefly noted last issue Steuart Campbell claims he has now solved the case. But has he?*

The full version of this case is discussed in the 1989 BUFORA publication 'Fire in the Sky'. A colour still and summaried account of the story is on the cover and described within my 1983 book UFO REALITY (Hale).

In essence Day obserbed an orange ball pulsating along a path to the north of him as he drove to an early appointment. He stopped the car, took out a movie camera and filmed the final 22 seconds. The object vanished within the space of one frame (an eighteenth of a second). Meanwhile at two other nearby locations some schoolchildren waiting for morning assembly and at least one teacher driving to work saw the object more closely as a dome shaped mass that rotated rapidly. No sound was heard by the witnesses.

From the start we knew that a USAF F-111 jet from Upper Heyford had crashed that morning. Assuming he may have filmed this on fire Day offered the results to the USAF immediately. They asked a few details but were not interested, leaving him in little doubt that he had NOT filmed the aircraft. However, despite attempts by the coordinated BUFORA investigation team (even Dr J Allen Hynek visited the site and witness in August 1983) and the Swindon based SCUFORI working with the MIC, we failed to get the crash report . Yet considerable detail was learnt about the F-111 accident.

For example, we knew the aircraft crashed at least 40 minutes AFTER the UFO was filmed and some miles to the north east near Milton Keynes. It came to earth in a fireball but had obviously not been on fire for all that period of time. The crew escaped using a then new and secret rocket ejection system; which may well explain why the file was denied to the investigators during 1983 / 1984 when most evaluation work was done.

SCUFORI reported that they felt the witnesses MUST have seen the crashing jet and been in error on their timing. I never thought this a viable option given what we knew of the school timetable and Day's appointment. Eventually, the conclusion reached by BUFORAs booklet was that either the film depicted an atmospheric object akin to ball lightning that may have triggered electrical faults as developed in the F-111 rudder system - OR more likely the 'UFO' was burning aviation fuel ejected briefly in the early stages of crisis. This would be abandoned as too hazardous when it fell earthwards over populated regions (between Oxford and Aylesbury). Inevitably, if this had occurred there was more reason why the USAF would have evaded public talk of a catastrophe that could give a whole new meaning for local residents to the term 'Aylesbury duck' !

It appears that sometime in 1990 ex BUFORA investigator Campbell got the accident report from the USAF. He wrote an article in August 90 for the British Journal of Photography and then on 13 March 91 advised Peter Day that it would appear when the editor 'can find space'. Day was upset by the tone of the draft sent and on 16 March wrote straight back to the Scottish freelance researcher pointing out how he had ignored all the witness testimony, and refusing permission for his use of stills from the film. Day remarked; 'If an F-111 were anywhere near my unidentified flying object with afterburner (to burn fuel) I and other witnesses would have heard it.'

On 19 March 1991 Day also wrote to the editor of the Journal explaining that he was firmly refusing them permission to use stills from his film. On 5 April Day sent copies of all this material to me and I was concerned enough by its content to write to the Journal editor expressing my thoughts and requesting a correction of rather misleading comments about the BUFORA investigation procedure found in Campbell's draft article.

For example, Campbell claimed that BUFORA only spasmodically investigated the case and reached no 'definite conclusion' - a travesty of the in-depth 100 page case file put together with extensive data and the really quite specific conclusions as pointed out in 'Fire in the Sky'.

Campbell evidently read the booklet. He wrote to Magonia in 1989 complaining about their favourable review. As 'burning aviation fuel' was the most logical solution offered here (although its difficulties were also discussed - which Campbell's article does not) it seems the theory partly developed out of the BUFORA investigation. It was certainly discussed by me in articles well before 1989; eg in OMNI. Therefore, for Campbell to present an article alleging that 'until now' (ie his recent article) 'the film has remained unidentified' and BUFORA investigations had failed to reach any conclusion about it - when in fact their 1989 booklet had reached the very same conclusion he was now offering - is, to me, rather strange.

Neither Peter Day nor I have (three months later) received any reply from the British Journal of Photography, who included Campbell's article unmodified - titled *Fireball by Day: Steuart Campbell explains another 'UFO' film* - issue dated 4 April 1991. A still from the film WAS used.

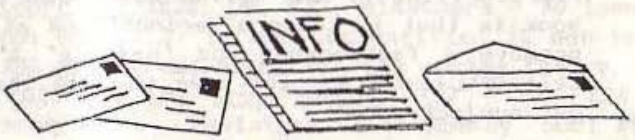
One response from Campbell was a note scrawled over a photocopy sent to Day saying 'Copyright law permits use of photo even if you don't approve for criticism and review' - which is a somewhat arguable point.

The case Campbell presents is strong. Certainly the accident report (which he did not release, but I have seen) supports the view that the F-111 was in the general area of the UFO at about the time of the sighting and DID briefly dump fuel before abandoning this. But did it create a floating fireball akin to that filmed ? Given the cloud ceiling (just under 2000 feet) if the UFO *was* the burning aviation fuel then the jet must have been very low and noisy. Also the flight path of the UFO and jet do not exactly match ; although there is undoubtedly a lot of similarity.

In truth, Campbell's addition of the report (he got it using the US freedom of information act) supports the view that burning fuel WAS the UFO but does not prove this. There are problems given the witness testimony - which we cannot just ignore. But it cements the connection (one way or another) between the UFO sighting and the fault which the F-111 suffered.

Regardless of this, I personally view the way Campbell treated witness Peter Day and the BUFORA booklet (which he never even mentioned) as being quite unreasonable. Of course, you must judge for yourself.

NEWS ROUND UP:



:: Times Literary Supplement discussed an Oxford University graded learning course (book and cassette) with two new items on the syllabus. One is 'City of Lights', about a NASA UFO encounter and subsequent cover-up; the other 'The Visit' (about "a likeable Yorkshire PC (who) loses his job" after a close encounter). Unidentified flying writs are no doubt airbone.

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:: COMPETITION RESULT Thanks to everyone who entered the competition last issue to invent a clever fake newspaper headline. The winner on your votes was Bob Brand with 'Corn Circle Hoax: Jolly Green Giant claims responsibility', but all entries were fun. UFO Newsfile 4 is available at price £1 if you did not win. Everything from a book on noctilucent clouds to an interview with Tim Good, a detailed report on the abduction craze to the great (real!) headline 'Town under threat from outer space?' To find out more get the issue from:- 16 South Way Burgess Hill Sussex RH15 9ST

WITNESS ETHICS: *Nigel Watson replies to last issues editorial*

On the subject of ethics and the use of real witness names - here we do have several problems.

When I wrote my book 'Portraits of Alien Encounters' (£12, Valis Books 52A Lascotts Rd London N22 4JN) I did use pseudonyms for percipients who had not previously had their real names published elsewhere. In the case of 'Norman Harrison' he actually complains about this (see p. 159 of the book).

The case which NUN refers to has been published extensively and the percipients did actively seek publicity. Having put their real names on public record I'd say it is impractical for them to expect us to forget their case when it suddenly suits them.

The fact is that percipients usually do want their real names published. In all probability they might regret it later. As investigators we can warn them of the dangers / benefits of publicity, but in the end they have to take the consequences of their actions.

To conclude, I would say that my book is more ethical and useful to UFOlogy than the coffee-table UFO books filled with garish colour reproductions of the Villas Boas case. I think the main 'problem' with my book is that it takes a serious look at high-strangeness cases but doesn't promote a fashionable and 'salable' theory. Indeed, those who cynically sell UFO books are the ones who are the most unethical and detrimental to our subject.

NB: It was fair that Nigel have this 'right of reply'. I suspect the witnesses concerned would argue that at the time they sanctioned use of real names and chose to talk to the media they were too young or inexperienced to decide, had no idea what pressure this might bring years later and could not predict how their future life might make it preferable to 'take back' that decision. But can any of us ever go back in life ? JR

CIRCLES UPDATE

As usual in recent years British UFOlogy ground to a halt in late April and doubtless will stay on hold until the cereal is harvested.

UFO CALL has told of the big breakthrough at a Japanese university in March when a highly complex triple ringed circle formation was artificially created in the laboratory by firing a miniature plasma vortex into dust. As a result crop circles have been sought and found in underground railway systems where there is a combination of rotating air and electrical fields. Along with other university work in Britain, the USA and Japan (all of which has supported the plasma vortex theory) there is now virtual proof that this is the basic explanation for what is going on. Frankly, those doubting it may be persuading Prince Charles (according to media sources), earning a fortune from huge book sales (according to other sources) and delighting millions by letting the mystery simmer without answer- but facts are facts and I am bemused at how anyone could reject such overwhelming evidence.

Of course, at least in my view , this is not the whole answer. The very poor early English summer in May and June produced only a handful of circle cases - of which THREE QUARTERS were hoaxes. In two cases the culprits were arrested. Then in late June a team of Japanese researchers arrived to run a project in which TORRO and BUFORA participated, jointly organised by Dr Terence Meaden and Dr Yoshi Hiko Ohtsuki. The favourable publicity for this and the plasma vortex theory in the serious media (eg The Times, Telegraph, Observor) provoked tabloid counter reaction. Up came a third offer of £10,000 to the person who can solve the mystery. This was from the Star and now £30,000 is available in total to would be sleuths.

However, as the plasma vortex and hoax theories are unacceptable I wouldn't bother losing too much sleep if you plan to enter. The editors decision is final. As a judge on the Sunday Mirror £10,000 competition my recomendation for partial awards to some very important papers got nowhere. I do not see how anyone can win this money. Of course, the prizes keep the story alive, which may be the point.

In the wake of all this - guess what? Many weird patterns appeared within days; doubling the 1991 total almost overnight. Coincidence, of course - or to put it another way Elvis Presley is a martian.

Personally, I believe there is a little more to it than hoaxing and plasma vortices (but I am biding my time before I spell out exactly what - and why - in Sheffield). However, the cereological circus is great fun to watch as it so clearly mirrors UFOlogy 40 years ago and is thus of immense sociological importance, if nothing else. The something else is a bonus!

Readers who want to keep up with this have many sources to study. Terence Meadens Journal of Meteorology (£22, UK, £27, elsewhere - 10 issues - 54 Frome Rd Bradford on Avon BA15 1LD) is most scientific. It has been recently discussing how the 1990 pictograms might fit the vortex theory. In a more general sense, Paul Fuller's The Crop Watcher (£7 - UK, £14 - elsewhere - 6 issues - 3 Selborne Court Tavistock Close Romsey SO51 7TY) is often slated by others in the field - a fair sign it hits a nerve. It is at times in my view over-critical of people, even though this is often understandable and usually valid. In the June issue you will find an amazing story I dare not have written about why I failed to arrive lecturing on circles at a supposedly open conference in Germany. TCW is by far the best source of case studies, hoaxing, witness data and criticism.

The Cerealogist I cannot properly review as they don't exchange . It is expensive (£2.40 or $6 an issue) and is widely hailed in UFOlogy as THE magazine to get (especially by American UFOlogists). This might tell you all you need to know . John Michell edits. It gets very scathing of plasma vortex researchers and takes an esoteric line. Well produced visually it is a very different look at the circles to either of the above magazines.

I have less reservations about The Circular (£6.30 - UK, £8.10 - elsewhere - 4 issues- 58 Kings Rd West End Woking GU24 9LW), but some since it lost its independence . I was disappointed in the tiny space devoted in the June issue to retracting a woeful piece about historic case data in the previous issue. But Bob Kingsley (like most in the CCCS) is an honest, dedicated and free thinking researcher and this is the most wide ranging and all embracing of these journals. It is fair and I certainly recommend it to any serious researcher alongside Paul Fuller's magazine.

FOR YOUR PERUSAL

Major articles elsewhere

UFO Debate Apr (£8 for six, 40 Stubbing Way Shipley West Yorks BD18 2EZ)
Consistently unusual pieces on UFOlogy ranging from Australian earthlights to the meaning behind contactee messages and poltergeist energies. Editor David Barclay has a book from Cassell soon called UFOs: The final solution !

SPI Jun (£7.50 for five , 14 McKinlay Crescent Alloa Scotland FK10 3RX)
More on the Allingham 'hoax' and CEIV member on skywatching. Plus cases. The best way to keep right up to date on Scottish goings on in the supernatural

Awareness 3 (CONTACT UK Sub 11 Ouseley Close New Marston Oxford OX3 OJS)
An interesting paper on the KLEE TV 'signal from space' mystery which is reasonably accurate, having just researched it myself for a new book.

Fortean Times 57 (£8 for four, 20 Paul Street Frome Somerset BA11 1DX)
The exciting news is that from July this ever popular pot pouri of wild news stories will be on sale in newsagents having been adopted by the team behind the comic 'Viz'. Good review of the phantom social workers affair.

The Skeptic Mar (£12 for six, PO Box 475 Manchester M60 2TH)
Chris Allan on the Roswell case and the search for truth.

Wild Places 2 (£6 for four, 42 Victoria Rd St Austell Cornwall PL25 4QD)
The Mantle, Potter, Walmsley contactee article makes its Guiness Book of Records bid with its zillionth appearance in yet another magazine! But a good piece on American saucer/Dreamland lore from Andy (sue me) Roberts.

Annals June (£7.50 for six, 8 St John St Wells Somerset BA5 1SW)
I am still struggling with the designer text but this is consistently interesting with a huge range of pieces; eg the return of UFO detectors.

Folklore Frontiers (£4 for four, 5 Egton Dr Seaton Carew Hartlepool TS25)
A kind of cut price Fortean Times there are always things of interest in the news snippets and articles. Love the chu-chu names 'mystery' !

The Ley Hunter 113 (£7 for four, PO Box 92, Penzance Cornwall TR18 2XL)
An interesting piece about patterns and another on Alpine light phenomena.

UFO Afrinews Mar (Price ? , via 115 Hollybush Lane Hampton TW12 2QY)
Cynthia Hind's irregular magazine is always a thickly packed review of UFO activity in Africa and indispensible given such uniqueness. Numerous cases from countries rarely covered in UFO books. A real treat.

BOOKS OF THE MOMENT

UFOs: The definitive casebook John Spencer Hamlyn h/b 192pp £14.99

Last issues lukewarm review of John Spencer's 'Encylopedia' has already been attacked by some journal editors, saying I was too kind. They have widely slated the book and it seems that my gentle disquiet about its usability problems are seen as a fatal flaw by other reviewers.

This large page format 'Atlas' has appeared simultaneously with the above, but from a different publisher and it does seem to cover a lot of the same ground (ie the worlds top cases). I should say right away it is a far superior book to the encylopedia and anyone considering buying either of them should consider no further. This is the one to get.

Divided into sections according to continent it is complete with single and even double page 'artistic' reconstructions which will either be seen as a pleasure or garish, according to your tastes. The Rendlesham Forest picture, for instance, gives the impression it must be a spaceship and I thought the Livingston case (amongst others) was a bit OTT. Nevertheless, this is a coffee table book - no more, no less. The pictures are meant to attract casually interested UFO-philes, not serious researchers - who would learn little new from here anyhow as the relatively few cases covered per continent are, of course, mainly the old standards.

One cannot blame John Spencer for writing such a book. We all do it. Even Hilary Evans has penned his own quite similar book some years back and 'The UFO Conspiracy' may well be mine. From its sales I know this approach DOES attract people in a big way. Indeed as Hamlyn also publish the astonishingly successful 'Worlds Greatest UFO Mysteries' they know their onions and I understand that John's book is already proving a hit.

Such works bring new faces into UFOlogy and I think if we consider it like that then in truth all else is of minor import. Nonetheless, I do have my reservations about this casebook. Take the Peter Day film (p. 100-101).

The 200 word summary in this book is misleading. A still from the film and a big artists reconstruction of ball lightning take up more space than the text itself, which argues that the latter is seen as a possible answer . What should have been said is that the film is unique in UFOlogy. It was screened to a gathering of Britain's leading ball lightning scientists in 1978. I was one of those who screened it to them and so know they said it was NOT ball lightning. Furthermore, despite Spencer's claim, the final frame of the film is positively NOT one that shows trees bent in response to an airborne explosion. It was proven to be camera shake beyond doubt. What worries me though is not these errors, but that both are explained in BUFORAs own 1989 published case history - 'Fire in the Sky'.

I found a few other problems (eg the 1976 Portugese case on p. 106-107 has been solved by BUFORA!) I accept that opinions vary, mistakes can occur and there is nothing wrong with personal views appearing in a book. It would be wrong of me to say this one is riddled with errors. But they are there and the Day film is a case where a BUFORA officer should have familiarity with the facts. Its wonky presentation is a bit disconcerting.

One could argue that this book will garner people to discover complex UFO reality for themselves. And that is true. I could well be guilty of over-reacting to what is never meant to be more than a spectacular pictorial jaunt around the UFO world. With 'Circular Evidence' this style of presentation reaped big rewards and in terms of copies sold I suspect the 'Definitive Casebook' will earn John loads of money. I respect him as a UFOlogist and colleague. I wish him all success, but as an investigator I was obliged to express my doubts about some aspects of a nice looking book.

Circles from the Sky Edited by Terence Meaden Souvenir h/b 208pp £14.99

You've heard of the film of the book and the book of the film. In effect this is the book of the conference. In June 1990 Oxford Polytechnic staged the worlds first crop circle conference, organised by Terence Meaden and Dr Derek Elsom. It was, of course, based on their atmospheric vortex work and excluded any avant garde research but included contributions from British, American and Japanese scientists. Paul Fuller and I presented our first results linking unexplained UFO cases with Meaden's vortex and tried to demonstrate that UFOlogy and meteorology had a lot of common ground.

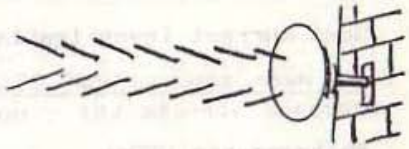
All the papers that were presented in Oxford appear here. This means you get to see how other meteorologists (including Professor John Snow of Purdue, Kikuchi of Kochi, Japan, and Dave Reynolds of Swansea universities - to name but three in other countries) approach the problem, proving once and for all that Dr Meaden does not stand alone professionally - if anybody out there still argues that he does and is a maverick - as once they did.

Dave Reynolds study of a specific and little known Staffordshire case is an illustration of a good circle site investigation. The Fuller/Randles UFO paper covers 30 pp of the book and there are a number of additional papers supplied post conference, mostly from scientists. Ohtsuki reviews the Japanese rice paddy field circles and early reports on the artificially produced plasma vortex experiments. An in-depth well illustrated review from Terence Meaden assesses the 1990 circles and attempts to explain the pictograms. Britain's leading expert in plant lodging discusses circles. There are some new and important (post 'Crop Circles: A Mystery Solved') eye-witness cases. All in all the book is full of new raw material.

Not surprisingly, the book is often drily scientific rather than popularly written. There are many diagrams and b & w photographs, but only the front and rear cover are in colour. This should not matter, but a lot of people buy circle books because of what they look like - NOT what they say. This won't sell as many as other books published this summer on the topic. However, it is an unquestionably useful (if somewhat one sided) contribution to our knowledge on this fascinating scientific challenge.

If you can handle the scientific approach to cereology and the disappointments and bubble bursting that are its occupational hazards - then you will appreciate this . You may learn a lot about circles but lose much of the romance in the process. Only you can say if thats a fair trade. But be warned - this book can seriously damage your illusions.

MEDIA MATTERS



A look at UFOs in the public eye

It was, of course, the Daily Star (who else) that broke the story of the century by reproducing the world's first authenticated photo of ET (7 May). Apparently the hairless alien (shown in full page colour) was one of the poor crew of the spaceship that crashed at Roswell in 1947. Looking remarkably well for one who has been dead a few decades, ET is appearing in a German TV show that the British networks 'might' buy. Someone from Quest was quoted supporting the story, but would not name his source. Also cited was Gerry Anderson (not the maker of the Thunderbids plastic puppets, it seems, but a US police chief). Unnamed 'UFO buffs' are said to claim the photo is of a plastic dummy based on the 'real' alien and I must admit it reminded me of the fake bodies used in a cleverly filmed sequence on Roswell screened in September 1989 by American TVs 'Unsolved Mysteries' (SKY TV in the UK). But who knows? Oddly, if ET is for real, this story was not the talk of the world after the exclusive. Nobody panicked. I wonder why?

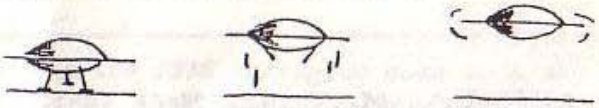
Tim Good's new book (reviewed next issue) is 'Alien Liaison', about aliens and captured spacecraft. Of course, he got a plug in the above story and also rather more cynically in the Independent on Sunday (12 May). Using an ashtray to perpetuate their 'joke' interview. Such ill planned humour only discredits the newspaper, not the interviewee. They quote a letter Prince Philip sent Tim Good, evidently saying he believed in UFOs and thought that Adamski's book 'Flying Saucers have landed' had 'a lot of interesting stuff in it'. Coupled with our next king emulating his name according to his media alleged views on crop circles, UFO buffs should book their seats now for that Royal Garden party.

The Barking Post (3 Apr) report how a letter claiming to be from the local housing department was delivered to homes in Dagenham offering to PAY for skywatchers to look for UFOs plaguing a housing estate. A bonus was on offer for anyone who filmed it! Dozens turned up to register only to find that it was an April Fools joke.

On 15 June the Daily Telegraph kept up its track record on UFOlogy with another dire piece by Adrian Berry. Citing Philip Klass it alleged that the proximity of jupiter, venus and mars to one another in the evening sky would lead to a rash of 'UFO sightings'. Klass alleged that one in four UFOs were planets or stars. My figures show this to be a considerable over-estimate. Whilst there were (of course) a few misperceptions the huge wave of sightings Berry expected simply did not happen. Contrary to what some so-called serious newspapers think most people have seen bright stars before.

This column would not be the same without the occasional reference to the Sunday Sport and its weekday companion. The editorial (in words of more than one syllable too!) reported on 28 Mar how UFO expert 'Tony Todd' (?) claims 'randy extraterrestrials are putting women in the club'. Old news that one. Ah, but on 3 May we learn 'Horny ETs game puts housewife up the duff'. Hang on, haven't we heard this news before? An alien called 'The Doctor' (who?) (sorry!) picked on her to play a game he called 'planting the garden'. This Californian woman is now pregnant AND being harrassed by MIBs. However, Peter Hough (silly man) told the Sport that British women are safe because none have ever reported being made pregnant this way. Some folk have all the luck - like Mrs X of Plymouth whom we are told on 11 June was abducted by a UFO and 3 aliens-who probed her AND then did her ironing!

BRIEF CASES

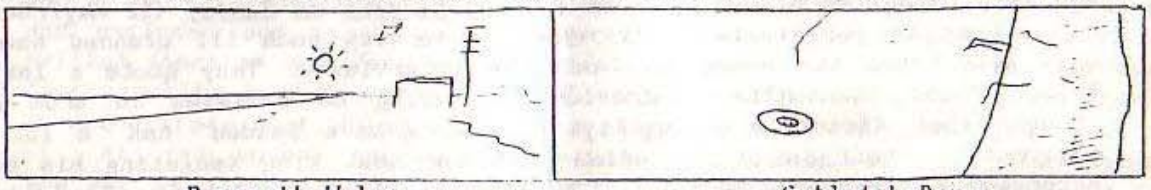


Some Current Investigations

Photographic UFOs:

Two recent cases of that increasingly rare type - the daylight still photo of a UFO - have come our way. Neither took very long to investigate.

First was supplied by a woman in Northern Moor, Manchester. It was a night shot taken at sunset from the beach at Barmouth in mid Wales whilst on holiday. Camera was a Rico FF9. The negative was lost, so all we had was a print to go on. Luckily this was enough. The image showed a beach scene, the low sun and a crescent shaped UFO ('it appears to be a flying saucer') to the top right of this. The witness saw nothing until the print was developed. She had immediately assumed that the image was a lens flare caused by pointing the camera straight at the sun, but as the Daily Star got very excited about 'shapes appearing on people's photos' she reconsidered. It was very simple to prove that the photographer was absolutely right first time round. Indeed a faint secondary reflected image appears masked by sand to the lower left of the sun. We traced lines from the three images to prove beyond question that BOTH are indeed lens flares.



Barmouth, Wales

Cotleigh, Devon

The second case was different. In April a man from Devon supplied a picture he took at Cotleigh 'half a year ago' but had just found that a UFO group existed. He saw nothing until the black and white print was developed but then 'it was (just) there'. He asked to be informed 'if it is actually something not of this world'. First impression of analysts was less than favourable toward this opinion, but the case had to be checked as it did depict a saucer like object in sharp focus near an in focus tree with background clouds less focused. Enquiries brought news that the camera used was a Canon TX loaded with Agfa 400 ASA film. The use of high ASA rated black and white film and good camera tends to suggest a knowledgable photographer. The witness now denied knowing when the picture was taken as this was a 'long time ago' but did kindly loan the negative. Despite saying that the print he sent was an enlargement it contained almost the same data as on the negative. This shows that the UFO is centred and the tree off to the right of frame. When asked why the picture was taken, given that he did not see the UFO, he reported that he was taking a shot of the tree. This is not the principal framed object - the UFO appears to be that (presumably by excellent good fortune). Work before return of the negative shows that the UFO is of the type seen on other photographs in the past which were not dis-similar in appearance to a shirt button. A twig just above is seemingly bent under the strange influence of a gravity like force. Witness was advised we could not say what his UFO might be, but unfortunately we did not consider deeper investigation could further our scientific knowledge.

AIRCRAFT AND 'UFO' IN NEAR-MISS OVER KENT

Just as good photographic cases dwindle, early May brought news of a type of case that is becoming increasingly common - the mid-air encounter between UFO and aircraft.

Details are sketchy and two different dates (10 April and 21 April 1991) have been quoted. However, sources are agreed on the following.

An Alitalia MD80 jet with 57 people aboard was on a flight from Milan to London Heathrow. It passed over the coast at Lydd traveling at 22,000 feet. Suddenly Captain Achilee Zaghetti spotted a 10 feet long fawn 'missile shaped' object that shot past the plane in the opposite direction about 1000 feet above them. In the air at the great speeds of modern aircraft this was about as a close to disaster as one can get. It was just after 21.00 - so dark - but radar at Heathrow picked up a target immediately after the report of a 'faint' and 'brief' trace some 10 miles behind the MD80.

Initial thoughts were that the UFO was a missile from an army firing range on the ground nearby but none were operational and sources were adamant that no missile could reach 22,000 feet. Indeed the ceiling for ground launched systems is 10,000 feet. Extensive enquiries were made. The MoD inevitably covered it up but the story leaked in Italy, forcing a civil aviation spokesman to call it a 'complete mystery' and an MoD source to eventually make the extraordinary comment (given that UFOs dont exist); 'What happened was a mystery. It was yet another UFO.'

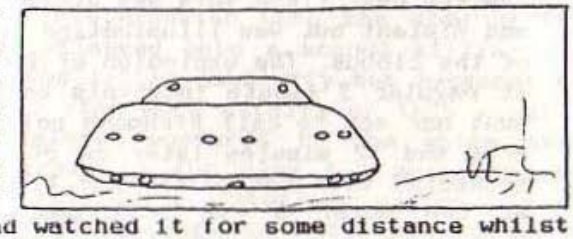
Hopefully, Italian UFOlogists will be able to interview the crew.

CASE 8552 November 1985 Great Snoring, Norfolk John Copsey BUFORA B3-5

A case reported after the recent BBC TV appearances by John Spencer and Jenny Randles concerns a man (a civilian at a local RAF base) . He was in the bedroom with his wife when they saw a white light 'like Jupiter' moving slowly across the sky. It was 22.15 on a clear night and the light moved SE to NW. But behind it were five or six smaller lights, trailing like ducklings after their mother. They had the appearance of floating hot air balloons but were drifting slowly AGAINST the wind. After about two minutes they slowly extinguished one at a time from the rear, the big object being the last to vanish.

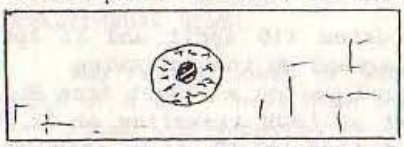
CASE 8759 August/September 1987 Biggleswade, Bedfordshire B5-5

Mr B was riding on the back of his girlfriends motorbike at 20.30 one night. They were on the A1 heading for Langford when she stopped because she had a moth in her eye. Looking along the road Mr B saw the object hovering over open land. It had a flat base and was covered in lights of red and white with a metal base behind them. Miss J saw the object too and reported she had watched it for some distance whilst riding. They drove off and watched it for 45 minutes but lost it when they passed through built up areas. On arrival home they could not find it. Mr B's parents said it was either a barrage balloon or airship. They say not.



GOODNESS. GRACIOUS. GREAT BALL OF FIRE!
CASE 8758 16 November 1987 Marton, Lancashire FUFOIG Brian Leech A3-6

At 03.11 a local band musician waiting for his gear to be unloaded from a taxi saw a pulsing orange light which he took to be a helicopter on way to the airport. However, it was silent. It then began to descend in 'steps' like 'a spider on its webline'. He showed the taxi driver who just 'shrugged and drove off'. By now the object was surrounded by a transperent shell and was akin to a lightbulb which was spinning very fast giving out a 'crazy pattern of light' (many coloured). The effect resembled one of those globes with electric fibres in them that react to static charges when touched. A faint noise like statgic 'or a tape being played' . Then the spinning and noise stopped and after a moment the object shot away. The man struggled to carry his gear upstairs, feeling 'drained of energy'. When he got to bed his wife asked if there was a storm as she had seen flashes of light illuminate the room. FUFOIG believe this is an electrical UAP.



CASE 9036 3 August 1990 Widnes, Cheshire MUFORA Peter Hough C2-5

Two teenagers were sitting in the park at 20.00 on a clear night when they saw a silver object over trees in the west. A second object appeared behind it and then both flew away to the north at great speed. MUFORA concluded these could be almost anything (eg kites) and did not pursue investigation.

ALL UFOs GREAT AND SMALL
Case 9037 12 August 1990 N & S Yorkshire BUFORA B4-6

It is possible that these two cases are linked; although some miles apart. Both occurred at more or less the same time on the same night. They are akin to light phenomenon reported near Menwith Hill some years ago (see PENNINE UFO MYSTERY) and not totally unlike the Marton , Lancashire, case reported above. The lesser of the two sightings (timed at 23.00) occurred in the Sheffield area when a woman saw a 'star' moving near Orions belt. It was a warm clear night and it travelled slowly in a vertical direction toward the ground taking one minute before simply vanishing. On its own this sounds like a possible satellite. However, at 22.40 events of a stranger nature had begun in North Yorkshire outside a hostel high on the Wensyldale Moors - real James Herriot country. Mrs H, warden of the hostel, was called out by Mr B - an adult helper - and her own son, who were watching strange flashes in the sky. After gathering they all stood in a field and it was some two to three minutes before they saw the next flash. This was pinkish in hue and distant but was illuminating the base of the clouds. The explosion of light came at regular 3 minute intervals and at first seemed to be lightning. Mrs H sent her son to call Richmond police who insisted there was no storm in the area and 12 minutes later an officer arrived, suggesting the lights were connected with Catterick army base. Later police enquiries disproved this. At one point a red ball was seen to shoot skywards and 'explode'. Then, after one and a half hours, the effect faded. Perhaps this was another laser display - at very great distance, maybe even as far as Cleveland (?)

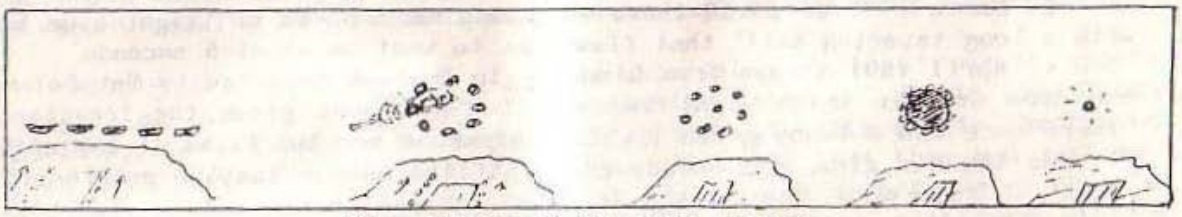
CASE HISTORIES

ALIEN MEDICINE Report by Margaret Fry

This is a most extraordinary case which has two main components, both remarkable for different reasons. Margaret Fry has conducted an excellent investigation into the affair, involving a man we shall just call Mr J from South Wales. He has worked in the building trade and comes from a strong religious background. Indeed he is a staunch salvation army member.

In 1936, age 8, J had rheumatic fever and was in bed for six months. During this time he had several out of body experiences, floating above the bed and viewing himself. He was also left with a legacy of 'visions', during many of which he 'saw' strange craft in the sky during OOBEs.

On 25 September 1944 he was aged 16 and in a small village called Penywaun in the Aberdare Valley. He was waiting for a bus to go to Cardiff. The sky was blue but then several grey 'half moon' shapes appeared and formed a line. Two of them glowed as they hung in the sky above a hill of ash and rubble (a slag heap from one of the many mining pits). The only motion was a pit waste escalator which carried material up the side of the slope. Small white oval lights were travelling alongside this on both sides as if clinging to the metal and 'riding' with it. They were rising towards the line of shapes in the sky which had now 'filled out' to full circles and then lined up into one ring like a telephone dial. A black cigar was sucked into the centre which was now like a vortex and left a dark spot which then gradually expanded in size to swallow up the surrounding ring of circles. Finally the one large black sphere contracted in size to a point only and disappeared as if moving away. Total duration of this effect was about 4 minutes, during which there was stillness and silence (Oz factor?)



The pattern of the 1944 vision

Soon afterwards there was a terrible disaster when the side of this very mountain weakened and the slag collapsed onto a school killing some children. As this was war time there was little publicity but Margaret has been trying (so far unsuccessfully) to find more details of this event in case there is a connection. J has always wondered if the white ovals climbing the mountainside had put strain on the slag tip provoking the disaster. In earthlights terminology this is a disturbing option. If any reader has news of this 1944 accident please let us know. Of course, in October 1966 at nearby Aberfan there was a second terrible disaster of similar nature and, according to an old FSR report a cloud like UFO with a beam of light WAS seen in the area as a prelude to that event as well.

Many years later, on 17 November 1987, J entered hospital in Cardiff for hip replacement surgery. He told others in his ward of the UFO (the first time he had discussed it) and as he was wheeled into the theatre under pre-op medication J saw himself on a 'bed of mercury' with a strange tall being rectifying things that were wrong with his body - except the hip that was about to be replaced. In the theatre itself he floated out of his body and saw the surgery as it happened, including hearing the surgeon tell student doctors that 'this man has healed himself'. Later the surgeon visited J on the ward and asked detailed questions about his UFO sightings. It seems he had been babbling about UFOs and aliens under the anaesthetic.

Before he was discharged one of the nurses asked J to meet him in confidence outside the hospital and have lunch. He agreed and she said that she and a student had seen J's 'spirit body' rise from the table during the pre-op phase and disappear THROUGH the ceiling. Later they saw him re-enter his body, but only from the waist up! They almost ran away but for the other patients in their care.

Margaret Fry reports that she is convinced that this case demonstrates how aliens do not abduct the physical body but take the etheric body instead. That would certainly explain some of the paradoxes of the UFO abduction phenomenon, such as those 'observed abductions' where the witness claims an experience but was clearly seen by others and had gone nowhere.

SOMETHING IN THE AIR (PART 1) Report by Jenny Randles

In January 1991 scientists were quoted as suggesting that an unexpected high level of ionization in the atmosphere due to solar flare activity might give rise to spectacular aurora and other effects. It seems as if quite unnoticed this might have triggered a wave of UFO encounters.

As far back as 5 November 1990 there have been a number of spectacular events dubbed 'fireball meteors', where often green balls of light have crashed through the atmosphere. Some other recent cases include these:-

23 March 1991 at 22.28 there were various reports of 'light blue ball with a long tapering tail' that flew east to west in about 5 seconds.

17 April 1991 a case from Limerick in Ireland reported by Pat Delaney and Anne Griffin which might be described (why not given the location!); 'There once was a funny green light, that shone for two ticks in the night, it made the air glow, and nobody knows, if the answer they've got for it's right' (sorry!)

Anyhow, mid to late February was a high old time. There were several spectacular cases (eg the 21/22 February Buckinghamshire time lapse reported last issue). But at first I admit I wrote off a case on the night of 20 February 1991 as of no real significance. I MAY have been wrong.

It was first brought to my attention by a flood of callers channeled through from Jodrell Bank. Ironically, there was a MUFORA meeting that Wednesday which ended prematurely over some minor dispute. At 19.30 members were trickling out onto the streets of central Manchester and this dazzling affair was literally unfolding unseen over their heads as the debate raged!

Typical of the calls I fielded over the next 12 hours were these:
Several workers at an office in Stoke on Trent had seen a 'big streak of white light that split the sky like an explosion'. At Mow Cop in Staffordshire a caller reported it as a 'big glow shooting across the sky'. And one case I delved into more deeply as the witness was extremely lucid came from a Mrs P at Sandbach, Cheshire who reported seing 'a big green thing that flew across the sky and went behind our farmhouse'. At first she thought it was an aircraft, scintillating from dark to lurid green but it never reappeared on its line of flight from behind the house. Other calls came from Blackburn and Oldham.

This wide scattering convinced me the event had to be a bright fireball meteor or a satellite re-entry. However, so far as I know the area of observation was limited to Burnley in the north, Oldham in the east, Stoke in the south and the Wirral in the west. This is relatively small if these sort of answers apply - but, of course, I was not to know the above for some weeks until after data was collated.

Early on Thursday, 21 February, BBC radio in Manchester asked for a live insert into the breakfast show to discuss the UFO. I said more or less what is reported above and explained why I thought it was identifiable. The BBC TV picked up the radio report and by lunch time were reporting (second hand) my comments on their regional news bulletins! My tentative offer had, of course, become a firm answer by the time it reached TV screens and the case was under investigation (but far too slowly for the media!)

My demystification seems to have upset some people as a caller who had heard the lunchtime TV news (but NOT given my ex directory phone number by the BBC or Jodrell) called to demand an answer for my pathetic explanation. This man gave his name as Mr McGregor but his Scottish accent was very Mancunian and I recognised his voice. Mr X (as I shall call this person) had seen the UFO and was not amused. I refused to be drawn and moments after replacing the receiver got a second call from a woman who was also claiming to have seen the UFO from Sale in Manchester. SHE wanted an explanation for my pathetic solution. I was very friendly and reported the facts and what I planned to do. When I asked for a number to call her back to report results when investigations were complete she rang off suddenly.

Mildly intrigued by all of this, especially as local press reports alleged an aircraft inbound to Manchester Airport might have seen something, I wrote to the MoD expounding on the satellite debris theory. On 2 May Owen Hartop of Air Staff 2A replied. He noted that they had just two sightings - which he copied for me - but added, most surprisingly, that he could 'confirm that we have no reason to link these sightings with a satellite re-entry. I regret that I cannot be more positive in offering a definitive explanation for what was witnessed'. In other words, in almost unheard of fashion, the MoD were offering evidence and DISUADING a UFOlogist from an explanation they had come to accept for a case!!!

One of the two sightings sent by the MoD was from a man (name removed) in the area of Sale - just as the Thursday lunch time callers originated. The witness at 19.20 had seen an 'emerald/lime green light - pulsating' for 4 seconds to his south and reported it to Manchester Airport. The MoD note says 'Mr xxxx is a well known UFO buff.' I wonder who this could be.

Report two was a rather more detailed teletype from Manchester Airport itself to RAF West Drayton, describing an 'object with a line of light inside a broad band, very bright, changing from green to yellow to white' - seen FROM the Air Traffic Control Tower at Manchester. This led to a whole new investigation of this case, which I will conclude next issue.

FINAL WORDS

Update on the international congress is both good news and bad news. First the bad news. Witnesses Betty Cash, Vickie Landrum and Charles Hickson have been unable to finance their trips to the UK. However, Budd Hopkins has confirmed he will attend and along with Dr Thomas Bullard will provide a fascinating American perspective on the abduction phenomenon from two very different viewpoints. The even better news is that a late addition to the programme is Linda Moulton Howe, making her UK lecture debut. Linda is the worlds top expert in the subject of animal mutilations and won an award for her TV documentary 'A strange harvest'. You need a strong stomach to view some of her slides but the issue is one that is worthy of an airing in Britain and should prove to be fascinating.

There are still a few tickets left (admission on the day will be on first come, first served basis). Prices are £6 per day, £15 for all three days and £2 to the CEIV rock concert where the group will debut the live English presentation of their 'abduction' concept album. Venue is the Sheffield Central Library 16, 17 & 18 August 1991 See you there.

Tickets from:- 84 Elland Rd Brighouse West Yorkshire HD6 2QR

NUFON Regional Groups

SPI	(W. Scotland)	14 McKinlay Cres, Alloa, Clackmannanshire	FK10 3RX
SRUFO	(E. Scotland)	129 Langton View, East Calder, Wst Lothian	EH53 0RE
NLUFOIG	(Cumbria)	89 Bare Lane, Morecambe, Lancashire	LA 4 6RN
HSWL	(Nth Lancs)	63 Devonshire Dr, Clayton-le-Moors, Lancs	BB 5 5RH
FUFOIG	(Fylde Coast)	293 Devonshire Rd, Blackpool, Lancashire	FY 2 0TW
NUFORA*	(Cheshire)	6 Silsden Ave, Lowton, Lancashire	WA 3 1EN
CONNECT	(Wharfedale)	33 Green Lane, Addingham, Ilkley, W. Yorks	LS29 0JH
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CUFOSC	(Shropshire)	117 Earle Street, Crewe, Cheshire	CW 1 2SG
SSPR	(Derbyshire)	17 Old Quarry Ave, Wales, Sheffield	S 31 8RW
SKYSCAN	(Staffs)	116 Repton Rd, Burton on Trent, Staffs	DE11 7AE
EMUFORA	(Notts)	8 Roosa Close, Bulwell, Nottingham	NG 6 7BL
PARASEARCH	(W. Midlands)	79 Sandringham Rd, Stourbridge, , W. Mid	DY 8 5HL
LUFOIC	(E. Midlands)	12 Unicorn C/van , Unicorn St, Thurmaston	LE 4 8AX
NUFORC	(Northants)	46 Occupation Rd, Corby, Northants	NN17 2EF

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